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Book Notices.

SOCIN'S ARABIC GRAMMAR.¹

Socin's grammar has been steadily enlarged and improved in successive issues, so that it is now an admirable introduction to the study of Arabic, and is pleasant reading also for the advanced student. The present edition does not differ materially from the third; only such changes have been introduced as were needed to adapt it to the reading of Brünnow's *Chrestomathy* (except the Ajurrumiya). The work fills a gap in our grammatical literature, and has been received with great favor, as the number of editions shows. Perhaps the author, in his effort to be brief, sometimes compresses into a sentence more than is desirable; the beginner needs simple and easily grasped statements. In this respect the Syntax is better than the Morphology; the substance of the latest editions of Caspari (Müller's or Wright's) is brought into agreeably small compass, and Caspari's portentous sentences are reduced to intelligible form. The large apparatus for translation into Arabic is retained; and for the benefit of pupils and teachers in such translation a key to the exercises has been prepared (*Schlüssel zum Übersetzen der in A. Socins Arabischer Grammatik enthaltenen deutschen Übungsstücke*, published separately by Reuther & Reichard, at M. 1.50).

The author very properly declines to reproduce the Arabic grammatical terminology; this may be done in large grammars, but would be out of place in an elementary book. Even in the great grammars it would be better to adopt the modern terminology (retaining, of course, the Arabic conceptions in accordance with the genius of the language), and to explain the native terms in notes or in an appendix. It is not easy to make these terms real for a beginner; thus, Socin seems not to make clear the syntactical significance of the distinction between verbal and nominal sentences, and the student might understand it better if it were put differently. In a few smaller points I should prefer statements different from those made by Socin: *wa* (وَ) in the sense of "with" (p. 97) should be treated as a preposition, and this meaning should be referred to the primary signification of the stem; the logical force of *fa* (فَ) should be mentioned (p. 123); and, in passing, the use of *siwā* (سِوَا), as = "other," should be added on p. 111. There is, however,

¹ PORTA LINGUARUM ORIENTALIVM, edidit Herm. L. Strack. Pars IV, Arabische Grammatik—Paradigmen, Litteratur, Übungsstücke und Glossar. Von Dr. A. Socin, Ord. Professor an der Universität Leipzig. Vierte vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage. Berlin: Reuther & Reichard; New York: Lemcke & Buechner, 1899. xiii + 169, 156* pp.; small 16mo. M. 6; bound, 6.80.

another usage, common in our Arabic grammars (and adopted by Socin), which is more serious; I mean the employment of the terms "tense" and "mode" (or "mood"). Every teacher knows how hard it is to make beginners comprehend that the element of time does not enter into old Semitic verb-forms; and the task is made harder by the use of the word "tense," which, to the man trained in Latin and Greek, inevitably conveys the notion of time. A number of terms have been proposed as substitutes for "tense;" whether or not we adopt some one of these, it is well to avoid "tense." The trouble with "mode" is even greater. Socin calls the imperfect in *u* "indicative" (p. 89), yet a few lines farther on gives an example in which this form is used in the expression of purpose—a use that the Aryan student will find it hard to reconcile with his notion of the "indicative mood." The imperfect in *a* is called "subjunctive" (p. 90), that is, the form which expresses a mere conception, but it appears (p. 91) that after the negative *lan* it is a pure indicative. The imperfect in *jezma*, called the "apocopated mood" (p. 91), is used to express a command, but, after the negative *lam*, it is suddenly transformed into a simple aorist of the past. We have the same sort of incongruity here that used to exist in the Semitic grammars when they called the perfect the "preterite" and the imperfect the "future." It is better to say at the beginning that Arabic grammar does not know our idea of "mood."

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KERN ON AN ARABIC TRANSLATION OF MOLIÈRE'S FEMMES SAVANTES.¹

Some little time ago I wrote a notice in this JOURNAL² of an edition of Muḥammad 'Osmān Galāl's *Madraset el-azwāg*—a free rendering into Egyptian Arabic of Molière's *L'école des maris*—in transcription and translation by Dr. Sobernheim, a graduate of the Berlin Oriental Seminary. The excellent traditions of that institution are carried on in the present book. Dr. Kern's work is even more thorough and conscientious than was that of his predecessor and may safely be commended to those who are studying modern Arabic.

It is needless to repeat what I said before, in reviewing Dr. Sobernheim's book, on this new movement in Arabic literature. As Dr. Kern puts it, the merit of Muḥammad 'Osmān Galāl consists in his being the first to use the written colloquial speech—not classical Arabic in any of its shades of perfection and popular unintelligibility—to bring the products of European civilization and literature home to the common people. Others had for long written poetry in the colloquial idioms; one of the first to do so had been Ibn Guzmān, the wandering Spanish

¹ INNISĀ'U-L'ĀLIMĀT VON MUḤAMMAD BEY 'OSMĀN GALĀL. Neuarabische Bearbeitung von Molière's *Femmes Savantes*, transcribiert, übersetzt, eingeleitet und mit einem Glossar versehen. Von Friedrich Kern, Dr. phil. Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1898. 154 pp.

² Vol. XIII, pp. 313-15.